

Take the your sh



With the new Nomix™ Compact there's no cumbersome knapsack, just a handy, 750 ml pack of herbicide which gives you all the weedkilling power of two full knapsacks of conventional water-based herbicide.

The pack simply 'snaps' into the Compact ready for use. There's no mixing, no complicated calibration and no contact with chemicals — the system is completely sealed and leakproof.

Use it around trees and shrubs, on paved areas, along fence lines or keep it in your pick-up to deal instantly with weeds as you find them.

Whatever the job, Nomix has the right herbicide: a choice of herbicides specially formulated for the Compact by companies like Monsanto, BP and Cyanamid.

weight off shoulders.

Send the coupon off now for product information and a demonstration video.

Nomix. A weight off your shoulders.

I would like to try taking the weight off my shoulders with the new Nomix Compact.

Name _____

Position _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Please send me:

Product information GI.6.91

Demonstration video

Complete, then send this coupon in an envelope marked FREEPOST Marketing Department, Nomix-Chipman Ltd, Portland Building, Portland Street, Staple Hill, Bristol BS16 4BR.



Distributed in Scotland by

TM: Trademark of Nomix-Chipman Ltd.
Read the label before you buy: use pesticides safely.





Is it time to take a fresh look at turf maintenance machinery?



Today fine turf is under increasing pressure from increased usage. That means increased pressure on those who have to maintain it.

New situations need new and better solutions which is why you should take a close look at the Ransomes Ryan range as part of your turf management programme.

Ryan aerators, vertical slicers, power rakes, overseeders and sod cutters work harder, more precisely and more effectively.

They offer a wide range, just a selection is

shown below, so you'll find the exact machine to match your requirements.

And their performance on the ground means real value for money season after season, rejuvenating turf and helping to ease the pressure on those who maintain it.

But don't take our word for it, talk to your Ransomes Dealer: ask for a demonstration, ask about back-up and service. Ransomes Ryan will give you better performance, more economically over more seasons.



RANSOMES

RYAN

**FREE READER
REPLY SERVICE**

Advertisers' Index
A Greenkeeper International service to show on which page companies' advertisements can be found. For further information about their products or service, simply use the free Reader Reply Service card to be found facing Page 4 in this month's issue.

| | Ad Ref | Page |
|-------------------------|--------------|------|
| AC & M Birch | 58 | 19 |
| Agripower | 262 | 34 |
| Bobcat | 272 | 35 |
| Brian D Pierson | 40 | 8 |
| British Seed Houses | 87 | 10 |
| Brown & Tawse Plant | 320 | 34 |
| Devenish | 307 | 22 |
| Dixon & Holliday | 214 | 12 |
| Flanderblade | 218 | 29 |
| ISS | 32 | 28 |
| Lawn Tech | 301 | 46 |
| LD Bourgein | 105 | 30 |
| Lely | 61 | 48 |
| Maxwell Hart | 15 | 47 |
| Nomix | 211 | 2/3 |
| North Staffs Irrigation | 217 | 29 |
| Par 4 | 27 | 29 |
| Pattissons | 35 | 12 |
| Pen Lubrication | 321 | 15 |
| Prime Watermen | 283 | 29 |
| Ransomes | 9 | 4 |
| RFE | 8 | 46 |
| RJ Sales | 322 | 8 |
| Service Chemicals | 304 | 31 |
| Soilcare | 46 | 12 |
| Supaturf | 164 | 10 |
| TIS | 153 | 26 |
| TRIMS | 317 | 15 |
| Watermation | 33 | 27 |
| Wright Rain | 74 | 24 |
| Colleges | 20, 21 | |
| Recruitment | 37-40, 44-45 | |
| Buyers' Guide | 41-44 | |
| Classified | 44 | |

In both our March and April magazines, for which full information is available, six out of every 10 of our display advertisers had definite responses as a result of our Reader Reply service. We'd be sorry for the remaining four out of every 10 if we weren't confident that potential customers hadn't got in touch with them directly.

Advertising in Greenkeeper International works - why don't you give us the chance to perform for you.

Ring Bill Lynch on 091 413 7218 or Carol Dutton on 0207 570117.



Official publication of the
British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association

JUNE 1991



President
The Rt. Hon.
Viscount Whitelaw
K.T., C.H., M.C.,
D.L.

BIGGA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Chairman: George Malcolm
Vice-Chairman: Roy Kates

BOARD MEMBERS

Ivor Scoones John Crawford
Harry Diamond Barry Heaney
Hugh Parry Paddy McCarron
John Millen Clive Osgood

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Neil Thomas B.A.

EDUCATION OFFICER

David Golding

EXHIBITIONS/MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

Debbie Savage



EDITOR

David White

Tel: 0323 891291 • Fax: 0323 895593

DESIGN/PRODUCTION EDITOR

Tim Moat

Tel: 0904 610611 • Fax: 0904 643074

SALES AND MARKETING MANAGER

Bill Lynch

Tel/Fax: 091 413 7218

ADVERTISING SALES EXECUTIVE

Carol Dutton

Tel/Fax: 0207 570117

PRINTING

Hi-Tec Print, Unit 7, Universals Crescent,
Houghton Road, North Anston Industrial
Estate, Dinnington, South Yorkshire S31 7JJ
Tel: 0909 568533 • Fax: 0909 568206

Greenkeeper International is the official magazine of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and is published monthly at BIGGA Headquarters, Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO6 2NF. Tel: 03473 581/2 • Fax: 03473 8864

Please address all advertising, subscriptions and address changes to BIGGA. Contents may not be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission. Return postage must accompany all materials submitted if return is requested. No responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials. The right is reserved to edit submissions before publication.

Circulation is by subscription. Subscription rate: UK £29 per year, Europe and Eire £39. The magazine is also distributed to BIGGA members, golf clubs, local authorities, the turf industry, libraries and central government.

Editorial Offices

All magazine contributions should be sent to: The Editor, Greenkeeper International, 13 Firle Close, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 2HL. Tel: 0323 891291. Fax: 0323 895593. Although every care will be taken, no responsibility is accepted for loss of manuscripts, photographs or artwork. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association and no responsibility is accepted by the Association for such content, advertising or product information that may appear.

ISSN 0961 - 6977

© 1991 British & International
Golf Greenkeepers Association

GREENKEEPER

International

CONTENTS

How green are my valleys...

Steeped in history and time-honoured traditions, Royal St David's is nevertheless up-to-the-minute with ideas on 'The Way Forward'. Their Welsh wizard, Roger Kerry, is our featured head greenkeeper as he prepares for the BIGGA invasion in August.....Pages 14, 15



...How green are their follies

Does the sight of lush green Georgia turf on TV send your members into making unrealistic demands, with cries of 'why not us?' David Boocock suggests that the vision is perhaps not always as perceived, together with his view that 'Green is not necessarily great'.....Pages 20, 22

Old ideas, new packaging, same mistakes

Instant cures, magic potions, 'new' ideas... Jim Arthur has seen 'em all before. His belief that there is very little new in greenkeeping today - only better and quicker ways of doing it - leads him to suggest that there is wisdom in avoiding repeating the expensive mistakes of others.....Page 9

Putting surface aeration, without the hassle

Aeration - turf demands it, players get apoplectic about it, greenkeepers must employ it. Now comes water-injection aeration, a revolutionary approach that is set to relieve stress - on turf and greenkeeper alike!.....Page 30, 31, 32

Wear your art on your sleeve

BIGGA merchandise has moved in-house, offering a vast range of items from T shirts to ties.....Page 16

DEPARTMENTS

Head Office

Neil Thomas reports on the Association's continuing progress; Annual report.....Pages 17 - 19

Around the Green

Work aside, golf and social activities are reported by section secretaries.....Pages 33, 36, 45, 46

Faces & Places

New faces introduced, movements chronicled, gossip revealed.....Page 7

Advertising Features

Irrigation - the search for perfect solutions among imperfect conditions.....Pages 24 - 32
Earth moving - at Pennyhill Park.....Pages 34, 35

COVER PICTURE:

Royal St David's, with Harlech Castle as an impressive backdrop. Courtesy of Wales Tourist Board

First of the summer wine

Tired and hot at the end of the day? In need of refreshment? To quench your thirst and help you to unwind, Brian D Pierson (Contractors) Ltd., in association with Chateau des Vigiers Golf and Country Club have devised a competition exclusive to BIGGA members, one that will reach the parts that other wines cannot reach!



Chateau des Vigiers is located in the South of France and has a new golf course opening in the near future, designed by top architect Donald Steel and built by Brian D Pierson. The complex boasts not only fine golf but also a superb selection of wines made from grapes grown in its own vineyard.

To sample these delightful wines calls for nothing more than correct answers to the five questions listed below. The first five correct entries, selected at random from the editor's postbag, will each receive a case of wine bearing the distinctive Chateau des Vigiers label.

Question 1: Name the architect who designed the golf course where the 1991 Ryder Cup is to be played?

Question 2: Name the two most talked about discussion documents relating to golf, issued by The Royal and Ancient's Development Panel?

Question 3: Name the course manager recently honoured in the Queens Honours list and the course for which he is responsible?

Question 4: What do the following five abbreviations stand for: R and A; USGA; EGU; FFG; BAGCC.

Question 5: Where is The Open to be held in 1992?

Your name.....

Address.....

Entries must be received by June 29th. The draw will be made under strict supervision and winners will be notified by post, with their names appearing in the August issue of Greenkeeper International. No correspondence will be entered into and the editor's decision is final. Due to customs and excise regulations this competition is open only to members of BIGGA residing in Britain.

Entries to: The Editor, Greenkeeper International, 13 Firls Close, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 2HL. Mark your envelope COMPETITION.

Flying Divots

An appreciation of what is not always appreciated

As members of a profession dedicated towards excellence, greenkeepers above all others should be aware of the meaning and origins of words exclusive to the game. Frequent misuse of golf terms is found in official histories of the game and in various articles published by accepted experts, such misuse continuing in print and common language to the present day. The belief that such bastardisation becomes acceptable through frequent use is one that finds no favour in these more enlightened times.

Let us start with the playing area – or as we commonly refer to it today – the course. In the earliest phase the game was played on seaside links – common wasteland twist land and sea used also for archery practice, football, bleaching clothes, breeding rabbits etc – to say nothing of courting couples and the like.

When the game spread inland the term 'links' was in many instances mistakenly used to describe the land on which the game was played. More frequently, however, the word 'green' was favoured. After all, cricket – the national game of England with similar rustic origins – was played on the village green.

So the golf 'green' was the accepted terminology for inland courses around the period 1880-1914 when the original golf boom was in full swing.

There are many terms derived from the word 'green' – some familiar to our ears – which have persisted to the present day in common usage:

GREENKEEPER – Self explanatory – NOT Greenskeeper.

GREEN STAFF – Always two words, Staff who work on the green

GREEN COMMITTEE – Never Greens Committee please. Course Committee not an acceptable alternative.

GREEN CHAIRMAN – Boss of the Green Committee. A Greens Chairman, if such person exists, will be in charge of cabbages and sprouts!

RUB OF THE GREEN – Becomes intelligible when the meaning of green is understood.

GREEN FEE – Course fee just would not do!

THROUGH THE GREEN – Applies to the whole area of the course except tee and putting green being played, and all hazards on the course. See rules: section 11-35.

PUTTING GREEN – Where the 4.25" diameter hole is found.

PRACTICE GREEN – The practice area, NOT a putting green.

PRACTICE PUTTING GREEN – Yes, you've got it!

I have an old catalogue issued when leather boots for shod horses were being advertised, along with 'all the golf green requisites from golf green fertilisers to tee boxes for golf greens'.

Published in 1927 in the USGA Green Section Record, the following rhyme by Edgar J Guest stands in good stead today. It is entitled 'The

Greenkeeper':

"He's on the job at break of day and when the stars are out,
There's always trouble on the course for him to fret about.

He starts the gang at break of dawn and follows them around,
He listens to committee men who's wisdom is profound.

They talk of 'bents' and 'fescues' in a way that makes him squirm,

For they acquire knowledge in one brief official term.

His talk is one that calls for tact, for lacking that it means

Next year there'll be another man brought in to keep the greens.

The members seldom know his name or have a smile for him

They only stop and wonder why the course is not in trim.

They rave and rant and rant and rage while hunting for a ball

And wonder why the 'keeper hasn't cut the rough this fall.

And when they find a cuppy lie or footprints in the trap,

"The course is in a rotten shape" declares each gloomy chap.

And yet my hat is off to him when winter intervenes,

I want to pay my tribute to the man who keeps the greens.

He's on the job from dawn to dark, a million pests to fight,

'Tis his to see that every green is watered every night,

The weeds attack his finest work, the drought destroys the grass

The rain beats down the tender shoots but still the players pass.

And still they play the game they love, a happy golfing clan

Who never stop to count the odds against a single man.

And so I wave my hand to him who toils in sturdy jeans,

The best old friend the golfers have, the man who keeps the greens".

Don't shoot the typesetter, he's doing his best! The Boom Sprayer Calibration Chart (May issue) had a gaff that needs correcting vis: Item 6, Product Application Rate should read Concentrate per hectare divided by tank per hectare equals Concentrate per full tank. On the next line Part tank should be multiplied by Tank capacity to equal Amount of water required. Still confused? Talk to Jon Albutt on 0959 75575. And there's more... Jim Arthur informed me that his blinding layer should have read: e.g. 4mm gravel over 150mm -250mm of 40mm clean stone. Oops, sorry!

Parlez-vous Golf? The terminology explained

Who and what are moving on and moving in, in the greenkeeping industry

■ Our spy network increases with each passing issue, the latest whisper coming from Andrew Phillips of the London Section, who tells us that Chris Greenwood, latterly at Muswell Hill GC, is now busy in La Belle France at the prestigious Chantilly course. Echoing Andrew and his section colleagues, we join in wishing Chris a smooth and prosperous new career.

■ A new golfer has recently come upon the scene, one Phillip Cosey, an eight pound bruiser with a grip that will surely draw the ball, born to Mr and Mrs Paul Cosey. Paul, secretary of the Kent Section, tells of ten weeks in which his hair has turned grey and baggy eyes are seen as the proper mark of fatherhood. 'Suddenly', he wrote, 'work seems very relaxing!'

■ That well known Scottish sleuth, Gordon Moir, informs that John Geddes, formerly of Auchmill GC, Aberdeen, is back in greenkeeping after an absence of 18 months. Having been 'paid-off' by the council controlled Auchmill course, John turned to landscaping but has now taken up a position as assistant greenkeeper at Kintore GC. Welcome back John and good luck!



■ T Parker & Sons (Turf Management) Ltd announce two new key sales appointments. Michael Luker, pictured, has recently joined the Company as Sales Director and will be responsible for the overall development of new business as well as consolidating the existing customer base in southern England. Graham Paul has also joined Parkers as Area

Sales and Technical manager for Bucks, Berks, Oxon and Beds. Graham is well known in the industry, having spent twenty years with Rhone-Poulenc, involved in all aspects of the development and marketing of pesticides.



■ Stuart Ellis has been appointed to the post of National Sales Manager - Tractors and Power Products - at Kubota (UK) Ltd. headquarters. Prior to joining Kubota Stuart worked both as a demonstrator and in sales at Kubota's dealership, J Gibbs Ltd.

■ A somewhat historic gathering took place at St Andrews recently, when a progress meeting was held at The Straththyrum, the first new 18 hole golf course to be built at this ancient capital of golf in several decades. In our picture are ex BIGGA Chairman and Links Manager; Walter Woods, Secretary of the Links Management Committee; Alec Beveridge, Course Constructor; Brian Pierson and Architect; Donald Steel, together with members of Links

Management Trust. The construction is expected to be completed by the end of July.



■ Equally historic in its own way is the decision of Macclesfield GC to construct a further nine holes on their craggy hillside course high above the town. The new nine is designed by Hawtree & Son, with construction handled by Fine Turf Construction and the Club itself, under the direction of course manager Larry Murcott. The land is no easy piece of real estate, most having previously been grazing land and with a high predominance of rocky sub-strata. More power to them then for their foresight in providing extra playing facilities for the good citizens of Macclesfield and in doing much of the hard labour themselves.



■ Lamberhurst GC head greenkeeper, Allen Butrymowicz, is pictured taking delivery of the first sale in Kent of a Huxley 358 Greensmower. The sale was made by the newly appointed Kent/East Sussex agents for Huxleys, Lamberhurst Equipment Ltd.

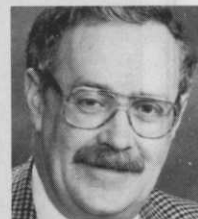
■ In a nationwide scheme which raised £72000, over 100 Clubs collected and donated over £200 to the Golf Foundation's Appeal and thus qualified for entry into the third annual Kubota Draw. The fortunate winners of the Kubota G1900S ride-on mower worth £5000 were Worplesdon GC. The Club Captain, Brigadier PJ Blake MBE, MC, is pictured below shaking the hand of Kubota's Vice President, Brian Hurlley.



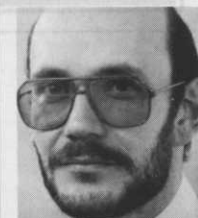
■ Chris Bryden, Product Manager of the Grass Machinery Division of Ferrag Ltd, is seen here presenting Les Purdy of Purdy's Garden Machinery with his prize as top Warrior Mower dealer. Ferrag have also appointed six more distributors:



Nairn Brown Ltd; K F Kirby Ltd; R.F.E.; Janman Engineering Services; CNS Mowers and Golf & Turf Equipment Ltd., bringing the network for Ferrag Warrior up to 25.



■ The IOG have appointed Alex R Millar as its new National Chairman. Alex, pictured, has been a member of IOG for 27 years, a founder member of the Glasgow and West Scotland Branch, and involved at national level for the past five years. He is a member of the National Executive Committee; Education Committee and Structure Committee and brings to his new post a very wide experience of management and training.



Along with this the IOG have also elected Ian Beaney as their new Vice-Chairman. Ian, pictured, has a long association with the Institute, having served as branch secretary from 1985 - 1988 and on the National Executive Committee in 1987, 1988 and 1990. His appointment brings his Northern Ireland home branch into the forefront of Institution activities.

Trade announcement

Irish Regional Iseki Qualifiers

With the 1991 ISEKI Golf Greenkeepers Tournament now under way, it should be mentioned that this will be the fourth year of the Tournament, demonstrating Iseki's full commitment to the friendly, knowledgeable greenkeeper. From the beginnings at St. Pierre in 1988, we progressed to Moor Allerton in 1989 and following that Tournament it was decided to involve our friends the Irish. Thus a regional qualifier was established at Forrest Little Golf Club, just north of Dublin. This brought together players from Northern Ireland and the Republic and resulted in a team coming across the Irish Sea to Moor Town for our 1990 final.

Such was the success at Forrest Little and the increased awareness greenkeepers there have for our friendly, quality tournament that the venture has moved a further step - two regional qualifying rounds - at Portstewart Golf Club and Forrest Little Golf Club having been held in May.

We at Iseki certainly hope that the Irish golfers enjoyed their qualifying rounds and we look forward to meeting both teams at our Final at Hillside Golf Club, near Southport, on September 12th 1991. This is just another part of the Iseki commitment to furthering friendship with the golf greenkeeper and course manager.

- COLIN GREGORY, Sales Director, ISEKI (UK) Ltd.

GREENKEEPER International

Looking for new staff?

Greenkeeper International can help fill the vacancies on your course. Why advertise anywhere else than the greenkeepers' own magazine?



Lake at 6th Green, Burghley Park GC, Stamford

The **TREE MATT**

A neat solution for Golf Courses

Why risk damage and loss of new tree plantings? 'Tree Mats' offer:

- A mulch to retain soil moisture
- Prevention of weed growth
- Labour savings – no weedkillers or strimmers
- Weight and strength for longevity



AD
REF
322

R J SALES, 227 Park Road, Peterborough, PE1 2UL • Tel/Fax 0733 341674

VERTIDRAIN HIRE

CALL THE EXPERTS



GOLF FAIRWAYS

GOLF TEES

GOLF GREENS

RUGBY PITCHES

BOWLING GREENS

HOCKEY PITCHES

CRICKET SQUARES

CROQUET LAWNS

FOOTBALL PITCHES



Brian D. Pierson (Contractors) Limited

GOLF COURSE AND LANDSCAPE SPECIALIST

HOMESTEAD FARM, RINGWOOD ROAD, THREE LEGGED CROSS, WIMBOURNE, DORSET. BH21 6QY

Tel: Verwood (0202) 822372, 824906 & 825979 Fax: (0202) 826447

AD
REF
40

Member British Association of Golf Course Constructors
Member Golf Course Builders of America

When will they learn?

Recently, I was discussing the trends of today's greenkeeping with a friend of many years standing and observed that in my opinion greenkeeping was at a cross-roads and that the crisis seemed largely unrecognised, especially by those deciding policy. This despite the start made on *The Way Forward*. 'But you have been saying that at intervals for the past forty years' was his riposte.

This I admit was certainly correct, but on reflection so were the reasons for such pessimism. Greenkeeping seems to suffer from cyclic disasters, all too often repeating the errors of previous decades. So-called new ideas – many not even new but recycled – are pushed by commercial interests, without adequate trials and against all the rules of basic greenkeeping. When they produce predictable disasters they are quietly dropped. The victims may not repeat that mistake but often fall for the next ploy. So few learn from the expensively acquired experience of others.

Such gimmicks range from 'new' fertilisers, magic cures ('apply this potion and you do not need to aerate'), 'new' grasses, 'new' methods of construction or even 'new' machines. I was amazed to see one such new aerating machine recently which was a carbon copy of a similar one which failed more than a decade ago. Why? because it took a week to aerate one green and the work can be done much better today by Vertidrain.

Too few with influence listen to experienced head greenkeepers let alone advisers. Too many seminars are chock full of irrelevant ideas and total heresies. Now we even have moves to train golf professionals to be course managers. Hopefully as the recommendations of *The Way Forward* are implemented we may see some improvement.

In the sixties it was gross over-use of complex NPK fertilisers. Several companies fought me – often unfairly – and where are they now? More to the point, nearly every fertiliser firm advises and supplies nitrogen only or 'no phosphate' fertilisers for greens. Yet we still see soil analyses being pushed as a useful guide as to what to apply. What does it matter if the phosphate levels are shown as very low if the grass is the right grass? If there are problems, the odds are it is not due to manurial deficiencies.

In the seventies, with increased numbers of courses installing automatic irrigation (pop-ups), but with no one realising it was fatally easy to over-water by merely turning a dial, the problem was over-watering. The British Turf Irrigation Association was set up and as instigator and founder member I tried to get better education and better equipment. Again, some unrepentant firms refused to listen – one even went so far as to say they had decided to assassinate my character to force me out of business – as I would not support their views. The top man who made that rash statement is no longer with the company!

Today most course managers, greenkeepers and chairmen of green pay at least lip service to the principle that 'overwatering is the cardinal sin of greenkeeping', made by that doyen of American greenkeeping, Al Radco.

In the eighties, the main problems were the use of wrong grasses in a feverish pursuit of colour, at the expense of 'traditional' playing surfaces. Penncross, introduced in the States to replace Bermuda grass in hot arid States, was blazoned as the grass to end all grass. Where is it now? It cannot legally be sold, though its successors can, but they are just as problem-ridden. All have severe winter dormancy, all pluck up badly with traffic, all produce thatch second to none and all suffer more from disease (from *Fusarium* to *Ophiobolus* patch) than any other. All these faults were clear to see on a recently televised English tournament. Yet they still have defenders – usually those from the other side of the Atlantic – whose experience of Northern European greenkeeping conditions is even less than mine of American!

I hear now that one much publicised venture is to kill off its Penncross fairways and resow with ryegrass – ryegrass, ye Gods! Do they not realise (and there are plenty of notoriously bad courses to prove it) that ryegrass – even the so-called dwarf varieties – never forms a close knit turf and with lush leafy lies control on the ball is impossible. The end result is top spin, players moaning they cannot stop the ball on the green, and then on goes the water. 'Oh, but it stays green in drought', say its advocates. Words fail me!

In recent years I suppose the worst heresies are connected with construction. Pure sand greens are extolled as the latest panacea for all ills. The concept, lifted straight from desert conditions where enormously high levels of irrigation are needed to keep the grass alive – even in fact to cool it – has as much relevance to Northern European conditions as caviar to starving Africans. For one thing, we simply are not going to have the water to keep them alive.

We see geotextile membranes used as the blinding layer over drainage car-



● The author, Jim Arthur B.Sc. (Agric.), was for many years consultant to the R and A Championship Committee, advising some seventy leading Clubs on the championship circuit. He retired from active practice in 1988.

pets – tolerable with pure sand, but with a sand/soil mix resultant silting up and flooding are predictable and inevitable – and we have known this for well over 20 years. But that doesn't stop some designers using them, despite categoric bans from the STRI and the USGA Green Section.

We see wall-to-wall irrigation quite unnecessarily installed – the only justification being to flatter a course on which a televised tournament is staged. The cost is astronomical, but even if money were no object, what is the point of a watering system with no water? Extraction is exceeding replacement over much of the South East and severe restrictions on 'frivolous' use are inevitable. Think on, you developers, before wasting money on a potential white elephant!

There are many, many other examples of the proven errors of yesteryear being blindly repeated today. Perhaps the cardinal sin of greenkeeping should be the failure to learn from the previous mistakes of others. Admittedly, commercial firms backing wrong horses do sometimes go to the wall and greenkeepers may lose their jobs, (often when it should really have been those ordering the disastrous treatment) but the real sufferers are our golf courses. Nature is very forgiving and grass very resilient. It is the basic tenet of greenkeeping that the botanical character of the grass cover (turf) of any area is determined by two factors: the natural environment (soil; weather; altitude; drainage) and the 'management' given to it, ranging from traffic to fertilisers. If these are constant, the quality of the turf – good or bad – will not alter, but if these factors change then so will

the grass. It changes for the worse far more easily and quickly than it improves for the better; and of course the recovery is linked with reversing the effects of wrong management. If acid land is limed (as was the problem in the forties as a result of post-war farming influence and advice) then it will be many, many years before the effects disappear and positive reversal: eg using powder sulphur, is necessary. This, in passing, we may be forced to do as a result of progressive bans on persistent worm killers by our E.C. masters – and who wants a none persistent one!

Frankly, with so many misguided treatments being reversed, often after several years (before the connection between the treatment and its disastrous effect was made), the poor grass doesn't know whether it is punched, bored or hem-stitched and may give up the unequal struggle. In other cases the desirable grasses have been so comprehensively destroyed that relying on natural regeneration demands more patience than those in charge of today's golf can accept.

It is fully accepted that golf courses have never before been subject to such pressures, not only caused by traffic and wear but by players demanding and expecting perfection for 365 days each year.

What is certain is that golf as we know it – backed by what for want of a better term we might call traditional greenkeeping – will not survive the massive onslaught which results from those with scant knowledge of the problems mistakenly perceiving that golf is now big business, with demand exceeding supply and a dearth of experienced men at all levels. A sure-fire situation to bring maggots out of the woodwork.

Do not dismiss this as the natural pessimism of a septuagenarian but more as a suggestion to look very carefully at most of today's instant cures – too many of which are on the same lines as advising amputation and a wooden leg as a sure-fire cure for ingrowing toenails.

It is not just a question of saying that the old ideas are best. It certainly does not mean rejecting – without a carefully controlled examination – any new idea. But it does mean acceptance of the fact that if the game of golf is not to be unrecognisably altered from the way it has been played for over 400 years, and get into the wrong hands, then all of us at all levels of management and advice must agree that if we are to continue to 'play the game along the ground and not largely in the air', and to play year round, then only our native grasses will produce the requisite conditions to make this possible. As one experienced course manager said to me recently, 'they are destroying our game', the sad thing being that so few of those pushing bad ideas have the slightest idea of the results of following their advice.

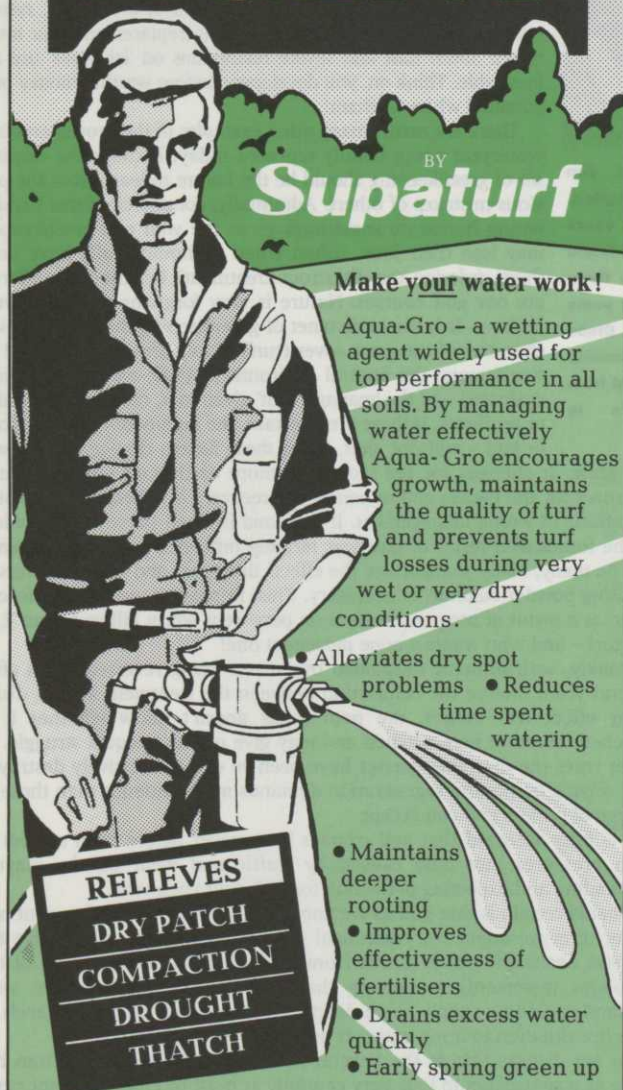
Please do remember that there is very little new in greenkeeping – only better or quicker ways of doing it – and it has all been seen before. So check and avoid repeating the often very expensive mistakes of others.



BIGGA
Get smart
– be smart

Our official merchandise is now in-house – save £s with the BIGGA half-price slipover offer. Use the order form in this magazine

AQUA-GRO WETTING AGENT



BY
Supaturf

Make your water work!

Aqua-Gro - a wetting agent widely used for top performance in all soils. By managing water effectively Aqua-Gro encourages growth, maintains the quality of turf and prevents turf losses during very wet or very dry conditions.

- Alleviates dry spot problems
- Reduces time spent watering

- Maintains deeper rooting
- Improves effectiveness of fertilisers
- Drains excess water quickly
- Early spring green up

**RELIEVES
DRY PATCH
COMPACTION
DROUGHT
THATCH**

Aqua-Gro Liquid - for applying with sprayers
Aqua-Gro Spreadable - for applying through a spreader
Aqua-Gro Granular - for horticultural situations
Aqua-Gro Concentrate - for applying during hose pipe irrigation

AQUA-GRO

The wetting agent you can trust

Supaturf Products Limited Old Fosse Works,
Coventry Road, Narborough, Leicester LE9 5GJ

STOCKISTS: R. Aitken (Seedmen) Ltd, GLASGOW Tel: 041 440 0033 • Aitken Sportsturf Ltd, TADCASTER Tel: (0937) 834746 • E T Breakwell Ltd, SOLIHULL Tel: 021 733 3344 • Collier Turf Care Distributors Ltd, NORWICH Tel: (0603) 870944 • John Lindsay Professional Sportsturf, CO ARMAGH Tel: (0762) 339229 • Stewart & Co Seedsmen Ltd, DALKEITH Tel: 031 663 6617/8/9 • Sta-Brite Products Ltd, BASINGSTOKE Tel: (0256) 811811 • Avoncrop Amenity Products, BRISTOL Tel: (0934) 820868 •

AD
REF
164

ARE YOU A GRADE-A GREENKEEPER?

Grade A Amenity seeds from British Seed Houses are for groundsmen who want only the highest quality turf.

Whether your requirement is for golf courses, sports grounds, parks, urban areas, road verges and reclamation sites - British Seed Houses can supply the right mixture for your needs.

At their extensive grass trials ground at Lincoln, British Seed Houses evaluate hundreds of different cultivars. Only the best are selected for use in Grade A mixtures.

With 24 different mixtures available, advice on the appropriate Grade A mixture to use for specific site requirements can be obtained from our experienced and technically qualified staff.

GRADE A AMENITY MIXTURES

Send for a catalogue for more details of Grade A Amenity Seeds from British Seed Houses Ltd., Bewsey Industrial Estate, Pitt Street, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 5LE. Or telephone (0925) 54411.



BRITISH SEED HOUSES LTD

WARRINGTON 0925 54411 · BRISTOL 0272 823691
LINCOLN 0522 86714 · EDINBURGH 0968 78480 · BANBRIDGE 08206 62207

AD
REF
87